

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service



National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

NATIONAL
REGISTER

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Old West Palm Beach National Guard Armory
other names/site number Palm Beach County Armory/8PR1161

2. Location

street & number 1703 South Lake Avenue N/A not for publication
city, town West Palm Beach N/A vicinity
state Florida code FL county Palm Beach code 099 zip code 33401

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	Contributing	Noncontributing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	_____	_____ sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	_____	<u>2</u> structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	_____	_____ objects
		<u>1</u>	<u>4</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A
Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.
Suzanne P. Walker (Deputy) 4/22/92
Signature of certifying official State Historic Preservation Officer Date
Florida Dept. of State, Division of Historical Resources
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.
Signature of commenting or other official _____ Date _____
State or Federal agency and bureau _____

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:
 entered in the National Register. _____ Patricia Andrews _____ 6/11/92
 See continuation sheet.
 determined eligible for the National Register. See continuation sheet.
 determined not eligible for the National Register.
 removed from the National Register.
 other, (explain): _____
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)
DEFENSE: armory

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)
RECREATION AND CULTURE;

art gallery

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(enter categories from instructions)

MODERN MOVEMENT: Art Moderne

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation concrete

walls stucco

roof other: coal tar pitch & gravel

other

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

Please see continuation sheet.

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)
Military

Period of Significance
1939-1942

Significant Dates
1939

Cultural Affiliation
N/A

Significant Person
N/A

Architect/Builder
King, William Manly (architect)

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

Please see continuation sheet.

See continuation sheet

9. Major Bibliographical References

Please see continuation sheet.

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository:

Bureau of Historic Preservation

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of property 2.6 acres

UTM References

A

7	5	9	3	3	8	5
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2	9	5	3	1	8	0
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Zone Easting Northing

B

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Zone Easting Northing

C

--	--	--	--	--	--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--	--

D

--	--	--	--	--	--	--

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See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

Please see attached legal description.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundary includes the 2.6 acre property that has been historically associated with the property.

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Tulie W. Taylor, Historic Sites Specialist James Ponsetti, David Edgar

organization Bureau of Historic Preservation date 4/20/1992

street & number 500 S. Bronough St. telephone (904) 487-2333

city or town Tallahassee state Florida zip code 32399

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Section number 7 Page 1 Old West Palm Beach National Guard Armory

DESCRIPTION

SUMMARY

The Old West Palm Beach National Guard Armory at 1703 South Lake Avenue in West Palm Beach, Florida, is a one story, reinforced concrete and stucco building designed in the Art Moderne style. Constructed in 1939 with Works Progress Administration (WPA) funds, it incorporated parts of an old police barracks on the site into its design. The building was expanded on the north and south elevations in 1951. In addition to the Armory, the property has four non-contributing resources, two buildings and two structures: a small pump house, a motor pool building, and a hydraulic lift, all of which were built in 1949, and a barbecue pit, which was constructed c. 1960.

DESCRIPTIVE STATEMENT

SETTING

The Old West Palm Beach National Guard Armory is set at the south end of Howard Park, between residential and commercial areas just southwest of downtown West Palm Beach, Florida. In the 1930s, the site was the location of a city police barracks, which was adjacent to a covered, open air, municipal farmers market. Produce from the farms around Lake Okeechobee was shipped to the city via the West Palm Beach Canal, which terminated a few hundred yards away from the open-air market. The barracks building, which was built in 1924, was used by the local Florida National Guard unit throughout the 1930s as a drill facility.

In 1939, the city leased the property to the state for use as a National Guard facility. The open-air market was discontinued and an armory building was constructed which incorporated parts of the police barracks into its design. The building was expanded 1951, and continued in use until the National Guard moved to a new armory in suburban West Palm Beach in 1982. Today, the Old West Palm Beach National Guard Armory is a local art center.

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CONTRIBUTING RESOURCES

Armory Building
Present Appearance

The Old West Palm Beach National Guard Armory is a rectangular, one-story Art Moderne style building with a militaristic motif. Built in 1939, it is constructed of reinforced concrete and clad in stucco. Portions of an earlier police barracks on the site were incorporated into its design. The main (east) facade is symmetrical with a central projecting bay that exhibits most of the building's stylistic features and contains the main entrance. (Photos 1 and 2) The entrance consists of four wood frame, single light glass doors. The original bronze door handles are molded in a simple, vertically elongated form exhibiting a ziggurat tapering at the top. (Photo 3) The word "ARMORY", framed by a raised rectangle and flanked by faux pilasters, is displayed vertically in block letters above the entrance. (Photo 4) A single five point star is molded onto the angled base of each of the two pilasters. (Photo 5) Extending down from the center of each star is a support pole which reaches out to sustain a cast concrete and stucco awning over the front entrance. The central bay terminates at two tall, fluted pilasters which flank the main entrance. (Photo 6)

The two flanking wings on the front elevation are shorter in height and set back from the central bay. Both have three windows, the middle being taller and capped by a cast concrete lintel containing three federal style stars. (Photo 7) The larger windows are twelve over twelve, double hung wood sash while the remaining ones are six over six, double hung sash. Each window is protected by a grill of vertical iron rods. These grills served as a security precaution when the Florida National Guard stored weapons and ammunition in the building. Both of the side wings are framed by fluted pilasters.

The remaining elevations are without significant detail, except for the pilasters that periodically interrupt the smooth stucco facade around the perimeter of the building. (Photos 8-11) With the exception of the drill hall, which has a barrel roof, the various wings of the building have flat roofs with parapets.

The interior of the building consists of a drill hall surrounded by office space. (Photos 12 and 16) The drill hall retains its original parquet floor and the glass block and clerestory windows lining the upper walls. (Photos 13-15) Additional office space

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was constructed in 1951 on the north and south sides of the building. These additions, located on the sides and back of the building, are compatible in height and massing to the original structure. (Photo 17. See floor plan.) The main facade of the building remains unaltered.

Alterations

With the exception of the 1951 additions, the Armory remains virtually unaltered. In 1982, the local National Guard unit moved to a new building in suburban West Palm Beach. In the mid-1980s, part of the 1951 northside addition burned. As of this time, it has not been rehabilitated. (Photo 18) The rest of the building was adapted for reuse as the Armory Art Center in 1986. Changes made to the building by the Art Center have been minor and include the installation of new drop ceiling (the original ceiling is still intact) and the installation of temporary partitions in the lobby to hang artwork. The four wood frame, single light doors that make up the main entrance were installed in 1986. The original doors were made of wood.

The Old West Palm Beach National Guard Armory remains one of the city's finest example of 1930s Art Moderne architecture in a public building. It retains its historic integrity of design, materials, feeling, workmanship, setting, association, and location.

NON-CONTRIBUTING RESOURCES

Motor Pool Building

Present Appearance and Alterations

To the northwest of the Armory is a small, rectangular building which housed the Guard unit's motor pool and vehicle maintenance facilities. (Photo 19) Built in 1949, it is a rectangular, masonry building with a gable roof and an open interior plan. (Photos 20 and 21) The front and back elevations feature garage doors that are flanked by protruding columns. The exterior is currently finished to mimic the Armory. The building has not undergone any major alterations.

Pump House

Directly behind the Armory is a small, rectangular building used for a pump house. (Photo 22) Built shortly after the motor pool

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building, it is clad in stucco and has a flat roof. It has undergone no significant alterations since it was constructed and continues to serve its original purpose.

Hydraulic Lift

A hydraulic lift is located next to the south elevation of the motor pool building. (Photo 22) Built in 1949, it rests on a concrete apron and is made of steel. It has undergone no major alterations since it was installed in 1949.

Barbeque Pit

A cement block barbeque pit is located behind the Armory. (Photo 23) It was built c.1960 by the local National Guard unit.

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SIGNIFICANCE

SUMMARY

The Old West Palm Beach National Guard Armory is significant under Criterion A at the local level as a reflection of the changing needs of the local Florida National Guard unit. Built in 1939 as a Works Progress Administration project, it funnelled jobs and money into the local economy. The building provided administrative offices, drill facilities, and storage for weapons for the local Guard and, during World War II, its replacement unit from the Florida Defense Force. Expanded in 1949, and again in 1951 during the Korean Conflict, it served its original function until 1982. Since 1986, the building has served the West Palm Beach community as a local art center.

HISTORIC CONTEXT

Development of the Florida National Guard

In 1903, Congress passed the Dick Act to create federal standards for a National Guard. A volunteer militia, it was to be administered by the states for civil defense purposes. Each state Guard would receive federal funding and could participate in U.S. Army drill activities.

Florida was the first state to create a National Guard in accordance with the Dick Act. Funds were set aside to pay guardsmen for active duty, and the need for a state arsenal and training camp was established. The Florida Guard was officially organized into two regiments, the 1st and 2nd. Guard units were formed, some from old state militia units, and federal funding provided new equipment and uniforms similar to Regular Army issue. Some units began attending Regular Army maneuvers and service schools. It wasn't until 1909 that the official name of the state militia, the Florida State Troops, was changed to the Florida National Guard.

During this time, the state began to fund, at least in part, the construction or lease of buildings for use as armories. Prior to 1901, counties were expected to provide armories for local units of the state militia. There were no state guidelines for the design of armories and only two or three counties had built their own facilities. Several counties challenged the state in court in 1901, charging that funding should be provided by the state.

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The court ruled against the state, which thereafter appropriated limited monies to construct or rent space for armories.

From 1903 to 1916, the Florida National Guard was called into service by the state fifteen times, eleven of which involved protecting prisoners from lynch mobs. In 1916, Congress enacted the National Defense Act, which designated the National Guard as reserve troops for the Regular Army. Shortly thereafter, the Guard was federalized for service along the border with Mexico, which was in the midst of revolution. The 2nd Florida Regiment of Infantry received orders in June, 1916 to report for duty at the Mexican border, where it served until the spring of 1917.

The Florida Guard was federalized again in August, 1917 for service in World War One. Guardsmen were taken into federal service as individuals rather than units and were thus spread throughout the Army. For the duration of the war, the state maintained county militias to handle civil defense matters. At the end of 1919, with the war over, the Florida guardsmen were released from military service in the Regular Army and the Guard. Of the 2,000 Florida guardsmen who served in the war, 104 died and 100 were wounded.

The 1920s were a time of shrinking federal and state funding that left the guardsmen with less pay and inadequate armories and equipment. Despite these setbacks, the Guard continued its role in defusing civil crises. Guardsmen protected prisoners from lynch mobs, assisted in the aftermath of several devastating hurricanes, and participated in the quarantine of the state's orange groves during the Mediterranean fruit fly crisis in 1929. During the early 1930s, the Guard began assessing its armory facilities. Most were found to be inadequate.

At the suggestion of the governor, the Florida National Guard began to research the possibility of obtaining Works Progress Administration (WPA) funds from the federal government to build new armories. In order to be considered for WPA funding, individual counties had to submit proposals for local projects. Some local money also had to be pledged to the project. By the end of 1941, the WPA had funded the construction of seventeen county-sponsored armories in Florida, bringing the total number in the state to twenty-seven.

In response to the growing crisis in Europe, units of the Florida National Guard were federalized beginning in November, 1940 for service in the Regular Army. Once again, they were sworn into

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service as individuals and spread throughout the Army. In the absence of the 4,000 member Florida National Guard, the state legislature created the Florida Defense Force to deal with civil defense matters. Brigadier General Vivian Collins, the state's Adjutant General, was placed in command. Although no pay was available for drill activities, the Defense Force received surplus guns and other equipment from the federal government. Throughout the war, the Defense Force maintained a force of over 2,000 men, which responded to seven civil defense crises between 1941 and 1946.

The state's guardsmen returned home after the war, but the Florida Guard was not reorganized until 1947. The following year it had over seventy-eight units and 4,500 men. Various units of the Florida Guard were federalized again in the 1950s during the Korean Conflict and during the Berlin Crisis of 1961. Florida Guard units also assisted the Regular Army during the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962 and were federalized during the Vietnam War and, more recently, the Gulf War in 1991. Since 1946, the Guard has assisted in state crises over 127 times, most particularly during hurricanes.

Since World War II, the Florida National Guard has evolved into a highly trained force ready to aid the state in domestic crises or assist in U.S. military operations. Today, the Florida National Guard has approximately 15,000 soldiers, 13,500 of whom serve as reserves for the Regular Army. The other 1,500 serve in air guard units and are reserves for the U.S. Air Force.

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

A unit of the Florida National Guard was established in West Palm Beach in 1914. The unit was federalized from July, 1916 to March, 1917 for service on the border with Mexico and again in October, 1917 for service in Europe. After World War I, the unit was not officially reorganized until 1921. Its headquarters were located on the second floor of a building on Old Dixie Highway. As early as 1925, the local Reserve Officers Association of the Florida National Guard lobbied the city and county governments for funds to construct an armory building. Inadequate facilities for weapons storage and military drills hindered the unit's training and effectiveness. No armory was built, probably due to the financial crises of the late 1920s and early 1930s. However, by 1931, the local Guard was using a city police barracks in Howard Park at Lake Avenue and Park Street for its drills and inspections.

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In 1939, an armory building was constructed on the site of the police barracks in Howard Park using Works Progress Administration (WPA) funds. The West Palm Beach National Guard Armory cost approximately \$56,000 and brought jobs and federal money into the depressed local economy. The importance of the project to the citizens of West Palm is evident in the amount of money and labor donated toward its completion. The site in Howard Park was leased to the Guard by the city, which donated approximately \$7500 in trucks and other equipment to the project. Palm Beach County, the WPA project sponsor, donated \$5,000 toward the building. The local Guard unit, Company C, 124th Infantry, gave \$3,500 raised through donations and dances. Local roofers installed the roof free of charge and other construction workers donated labor through their union organization when funding for the project ran short.

West Palm Beach architect William Manley King designed the Armory in the Art Moderne style. Parts of the police barracks were incorporated into the new building, which featured a stepped front facade, molded stars over the front windows, and a scalloped parapet. King, who practiced in West Palm from 1921 to 1962, is credited with designing many of city's private residences, hotels, apartments, and public buildings, particularly schools. The Palm Beach High School (1922-24), Palm Beach Junior College Building (1927, NR 1991), Conniston Road School (1941), and the Hibiscus Gardens Apartments (1924, NR 1984, demolished) are among the buildings he designed.

By the end of 1939, Company C had fifty-nine men. On November 25, 1940 the unit was mobilized into federal service until the end of World War II. Because of the federalization of the Guard, a local unit of the Florida Defense Force was organized for civil defense purposes in West Palm Beach, one of the state's major east coast cities. Under the command of Captain Richard D. Hill, the unit consisted of Company B, 8th Battalion of the Florida Defense Force. At its headquarters in the Armory, Company B learned about civil defense operations and practiced military training exercises. The unit coordinated its activities with the Palm Beach County chapter of the Florida Defense Council, which was charged with organizing local civilians in the defense effort. Company B also maintained the Armory until the return of the National Guard.

A Florida National Guard unit was not reorganized in West Palm Beach until April 14, 1947 when Company F, 211th Infantry, was

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placed under the command of Captain John Burbridge. It was joined by the Head Quarters Battery of the 265th Air Defense Artillery. The unit was later reorganized as Company B, 1st Battalion, 124th Infantry.

During the late 1940s and early 1950s, rising federal standards for the National Guard during the Cold War and the Korean Conflict increased its training requirements and made it a more valuable resource. In 1949 and again in 1951, the West Palm Beach National Guard Armory facility was expanded. A motor pool building, a hydraulic lift, and a small pump house were constructed behind the Armory in 1949. Additional office space was added to the north and south sides of the Armory in 1951. The additional wings and the motor pool building reflect the local Guard unit's need for better, more secure facilities in one of south Florida's coastal population centers.

Aside from its official function, the Armory served as a public meeting place for local social events and as a storm shelter. In 1982, the local unit, Company B, 1st Battalion, 124th Infantry, moved to new facilities on Gun Club Road in suburban West Palm Beach. The Old West Palm Beach National Guard Armory at Lake Avenue and Park Street continues to serve the community as a local art center.

The Old West Palm Beach National Guard Armory is significant as a reflection of the changing needs of the Florida National Guard in Palm Beach County from the the late 1930s through the beginning of World War II. The construction of the building brought money into the depressed local economy and provided training facilities for the local Guard unit, which was called to federal service soon thereafter. During the war, the building served as the center of local defense activities. The Armory remains one of the last Art Moderne style public buildings in West Palm Beach.

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Hawk, Robert. Florida's Army. Pineapple Press, Englewood, Florida. 1986

Historical Annual of the National Guard of the State of Florida. Army and Navy Publishing Company, Baton Rouge, Louisiana. 1939.

Palm Beach Post. West Palm Beach. 1921, 1927, 1931, 1934, 1938, 1939.

Palm Beach Times. West Palm Beach. 1927.

State of Florida. Department of Military Affairs. General correspondence (1920s through 1940s) relating to the building and maintenance of armories in Florida. Florida State Archives, Tallahassee.

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PHOTOGRAPHS

1. Old West Palm Beach National Guard Armory
1703 South Lake Avenue
2. West Palm Beach, Florida
3. David A. Edgar
4. Spring 1991
5. Armory Arts Center, 1703 South Lake Avenue,
West Palm Beach, Florida
6. Main elevation, camera facing northwest
7. 1

Items 1-5 are the same for all photos.

6. Main elevation, camera facing southwest
Note motor pool building in back of Armory on right side
7. 2
6. Close-up of door handle, main entrance, camera facing
west
7. 3
6. Stylistic details above main entrance, camera facing
west
7. 4
6. Close-up of five point star above main entrance, camera
facing west
7. 5
6. Close-up of fluted pilaster, main elevation, camera
facing southwest
7. 6
6. Window, main elevation, camera facing west
7. 7
6. South elevation, camera facing northwest
7. 8
6. West elevation, camera facing southeast
7. 9

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- 6. Corner of west and north elevations, camera facing southeast
- 7. 10

- 6. Main (east) and north elevations, camera facing southwest
- 7. 11

- 6. Interior of drill hall, camera facing northwest
- 7. 12

- 6. Parquet floor in drill hall, camera facing west
- 7. 13

- 6. Windows and ceiling in drill hall, camera facing northwest
- 7. 14

- 6. Close-up of window in drill hall, camera facing north
- 7. 15

- 6. One of original Armory offices, camera facing southeast
- 7. 16

- 6. Classroom in 1951 addition on west elevation, camera facing northwest
- 7. 17

- 6. Interior of burned out area in 1951 addition on north elevation, camera facing east
- 7. 18

- 6. West side of motor pool building, camera facing east
- 7. 19

- 6. Interior of motor pool building, camera facing southwest
- 7. 20

- 6. Interior of motor pool building, camera facing northeast
- 7. 21

- 6. Hydraulic lift and pump house, camera facing east
- 7. 22

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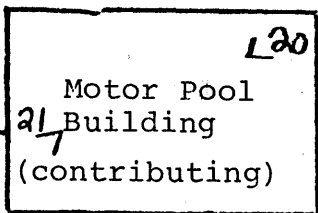
6. Barbeque pit, camera facing southeast
7. 23

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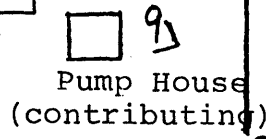
Howard Park Baseball Field ↑

Access Road

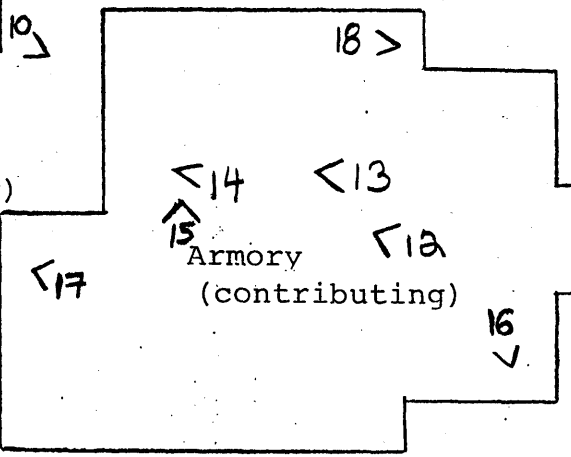
19 >



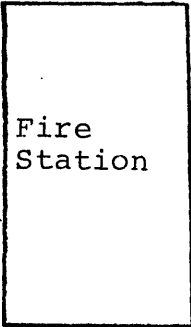
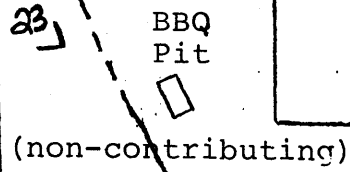
Parking



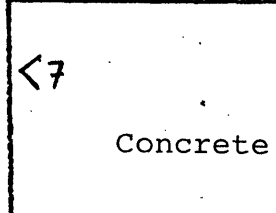
Hydraulic Lift
(contributing)



Parking



Sidewalk



Green Space

Lake Avenue

Caroline Street

Parking

Park Street

NORTH ↑

Old West Palm Beach National Guard Armory
West Palm Beach, Florida.

SITE PLAN




Scale 1 inch = 25 feet
(approximate)

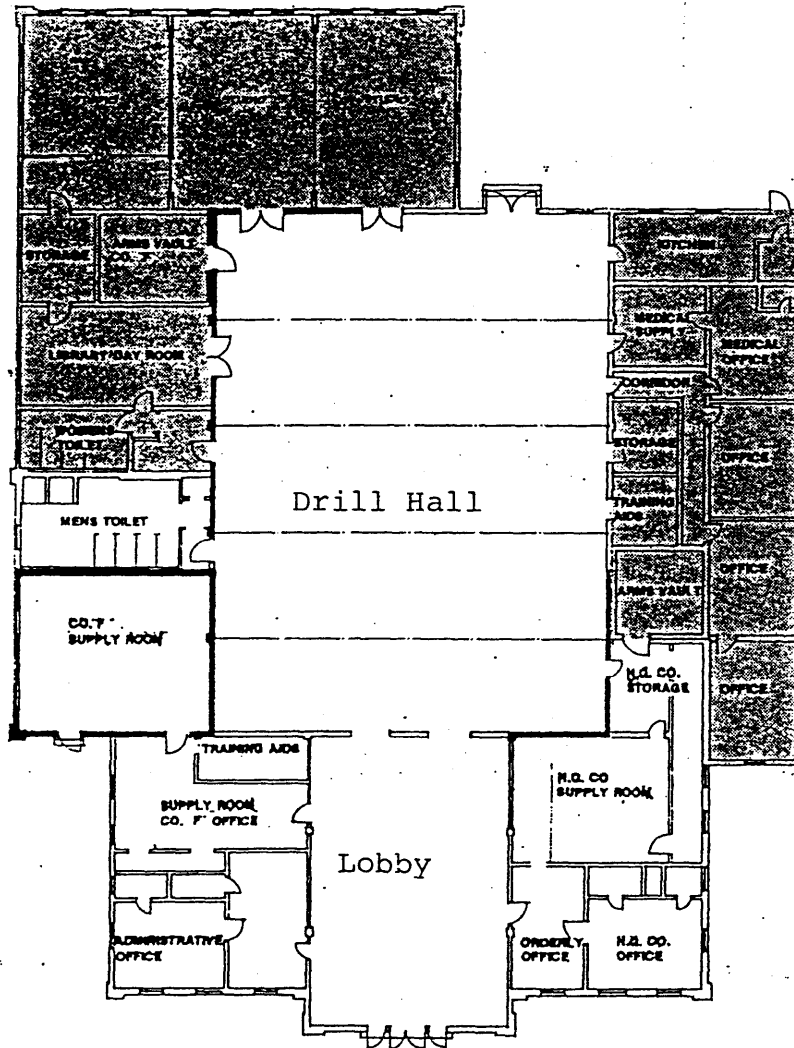
- - - - - = boundary of nominated property
 1 > = photo number & camera angle

Old West Palm Beach National Guard Armory
West Palm Beach, Florida

A 104

LEGEND FOR BUILDING MORPHOLOGY

-  EXISTING WALLS PREDATING 1932
-  AREAS OF NEW CONSTRUCTION , 1939
-  ADDITIONS, 1951



AS-BUILT FLOOR PLAN

NO SCALE

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LEGAL DESCRIPTION

West Palm Beach National Guard Armory
West Palm Beach, Florida

Acreege of property 2.6 acres

Verbal Boundary Description

Beginning at a point which is the intersection of the west line of Lake Avenue and the north line of Park Street, being the point of beginning, and proceeding northerly along the west line of Lake Avenue, a distance of 241.17' to a point; thence proceeding westerly along a line, which is 90-15' with the aforementioned line, a distance of 520.78 feet to a point, which is the easterly line of Parker Avenue extended to the north; thence proceeding in a westerly direction along a line which is 111-35'-15" with the aforesaid line being the easterly of Parker Avenue extended, a distance of 73.6 feet to a point, which is the intersection of the easterly line of Parker avenue extended and the northerly line of Caroline Street; thence proceeding southeasterly along the northerly line of Caroline Street, said line being a curve of 23 degrees to the north, a distance of 276.1 feet to a point which is the intersection of a foresaid line with northerly line of Park Street, thence proceeding easterly along a line 353.42 feet, said being the northerly line of Park Street to a point of beginning.
